NARRATIVE

OF A

MAID

Lately burnt to death in a strange and wonderful manner, by the force of a Chymical Spirit seizing upon her.

ALSO

A True RELATION of a sad ACCIDENT that happened on three Persons that lived about *Cow-Cross*, near *West-Smithfield*, (a Story no less sad than true,) being lately kill'd with drinking of adulterated White-Wine.

With Allowance.

LONDON, Printed for *D. M.* 1698.

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IF we consult the *Bills of Fair* that are weekly brought in of *Deaths* Festivals, we may find, that though Mortality be the Dish, yet, as 'twere to *divert* the Appetite of this great *Devourer*, it is variously dressed; while some seem rosted by the Calenture of a burning Fever, others sodden in the humidities of an over-flowing Dropsie, some hasht and *carbonado'd* with Wounds and Ulcers, and others mined and attenuated by the *Tabes* of a pining Consumption; and besides these common ways of dying, as if Death delighted in modes of Epicurism, by how many strange and unusual ways are Persons often serv'd up to this Banquet of mortality.

It was the unnatural cruelty of Tyrants and Persecutors of old, and of some barbarous Nations at this day, to be bruitishly ingenious, in carving up humane Bodies with strange and unusual Torments: And although the blessed God, in whose hands our lives are, and by his secret Counsels hath determin'd the time and manner of their dissolution, be far from allowing such cruel inventions of torturing the Bodies of our fellow Creatures, yet he is sometimes pleased, by his Providence, to call back the Spirits (even

(even of his deareſt Children) by ſtrange and unuſual ways of dying; a ſignal inſtance whereof we have in the poor Maid, the ſubject of this Narrative, whom it pleaſed God, by a late, ſuddain, and very ſtrange ſtroke, to take to himſelf.

And although the ſtrangeneſs of the thing hath been the occaſion of much rumour already; yet, neither to gratifie the humour of the curious, nor for any private advantage, much leſs to awaken the grief of her diſconſolate Relations by this mention, is this Narrative publiſhed, but rather, and chiefly to prevent ſome falſe Accounts, which we hear are intended to be given of it, with ſuch ſiniſter reflections, as would tend much to the wrong of the deceaſed, and conſequently to the diſquiet of thoſe her ſurviving Relations. The Father of this Maid, (a ſober, honeſt Perſon, and of good credit and eſteem with his Neighbours) uſed, it ſeems, to prepare, in a pyrotechnical way, an Extract or Spirit (whether vegetable or mineral is unknown to us, and not much material to our purpoſe) which is much us'd in varniſhing, and is, when fermented to its higheſt exaltation, of that fierce and crematious quality, as to be able to fire Gun-powder put into it; but a more ſtrange inſtance of the power of it appeared in the deplorable ſubject of this diſcourſe.

For ſome of it thus prepar'd, being diſpos'd in Glaſſes in a place where this Maid hapened to be, the unruly Spirit labouring with a violent fermentation on a ſudden, (having received its errand to deſtroy a Spirit of a more noble compoſition) breaks

through its glaſſy Walls, and the volatile parts thereof being fired through the violence of the motion, together with its own native calour, ruſhes in a flaming torrent upon the body of the diſtreſſed Maid, little dreaming or expecting of ſuch a danger, and fell burning in a moſt fierce and violent manner, [illegible] hands, Cloths, and whatever it could lay hold

Her Father happened to be then in the ſame Room, but whether his own Eyes or her Shreeks gave him the firſt notice of her diſtreſs, is unknown to us; but upon the firſt diſcovery of it, you may imagine he was not wanting by what endeavours he could uſe in ſo great a ſurprize and affrightment, to deliver her from the danger, they got water and threw upon her to extinguiſh the burning, but that would no more do it then to aſſwage the Calenture of a Lime-heap: So violent was the raging of this fierce Spirit, that ſuch means ſeem'd rather to aggravate than aſſwage its fervour.

It continued thus preying upon her, amidſt the dolorous Shreeks and Cryes that the pain thereof put her to, till having conſum'd her Cloths, in a ſhort time it penetrated her ſcortched Fleſh, and then aſſaulted the very Archæus or Spirit of life it ſelf, which, in a few hours, by the fierce cremations of this Elixir, was at laſt overcome and deſtroyed about two hours after, ſhe lived about four hours in all: Finding no hopes of her preſervation, care was taken (at her requeſt) to have a Miniſter ſent for, whoſe Prayers and Counſels might be aſſiſtant to her in her laſt agonies; and accordingly there came one to her, whoſe pious endea-

endeavours were very comfortable and helpful to her in her dying conflicts, and so having piously and devoutly commended her departing Spirit, at the close of this fiery visitation, into the hands of God, she is released from her pains; and by this short, though sharp and bitter, passage is conveyed to her rest, and that joy and blessedness, which considering her innocent and vertuous life, we have no reason to question her being now possest of.

If any should impiously dare to fasten any uncharitable Reflection upon her or her Relations, upon the account of this strange and unusual Providence, let them first reflect upon themselves, and consider whether if God should by any such suddain stroke take them out of the World, and throw them into Hell, whether they could justifie themselves against the severity of such a punishment; let not them think that they are the lesser Sinners, but that except they repent they shall all likewise perish.

Neither can any thing be rationally or charitably argued from the seeming severity of such dispensations, to conclude any thing against the afflicted party, seeing it hath pleased God oftentimes to afflict his most beloved ones, many times with as sudden and violent deaths, as *Eli*, *Josiah* and others.

If we would make a right construction and due improvement of such Instances, we should rather learn to admire and adore the infinite Mercies of God towards our selves, that having (for our Sins) the same Sentence of death past upon us, as those that have gone before us, have by a gracious Providence been so long preserv'd amidst so many dangers and casualties that might have fallen upon us as well us others; and withall seeing (by such Instances) how uncertain our lifes are to be always prepar'd to meet that with comfort which we must sooner or later certainly meet with; the time and manner of our death is hid from us, in the secret decrees of Gods Providence; it is our duty therefore always to watch that we be not surprised by that evil hour.

A true

A Relation of a ſad Accident that happened on three Perſons nigh Cow-Croſs.

IT is not without great Reaſon our moſt judicious Phyſicians do frequently adviſe us to the moderate uſe of our Native Liquors, rather than pin our Lives on outlandiſh Sleeves, by ſo greedily imbibing their adulterated Wines, which with an effeminate curioſity, becauſe they are far fetcht and dear bought, we fooliſhly eſteem as admirable, when every man, were he induſtrious, might ſqueeze more ſalubrious *Nectar* out of his own Orchyard. For what Drink poſſibly can be more congruous to an Engliſh Conſtitution than that of *Sider*? whoſe vigorous ſparkles, as ſoon as got quit of the impriſoning Bottle, frequently leap over the Glaſs or Cup, as if they met us half way in the deſired draught.

But alas, there is lately grown a kind of reputation, or faſhion in drinking, ſo that it is enough to brand a man of Converſation with the hated title of *Coward*, ſhould he baulk a Tavern where he ſuſpects to be poyſon'd, to dare ken a Red-Lattice where he may drink ſecurely.

But what little Reaſon we have to prefer thoſe mixed, and ſometimes poyſonous Liquors, before our own, which without adulteration we may be ſufficiently ſatisfied do naturally proceed from Malt or Apples,

ples, is best known by those dismal Examples of mortality many have shewn us, who have been but even moderate Drinkers of White-Wine, and the continued health and vivacity of those who have been even extravagant devourers of their Native Liquors. An Instance of the former of which we are about to relate.

About the 10*th* of this instant *August*, it happened that three Persons, who lately lived hard by each other, in *Turnmill-street* and *Cow-Cross*, went out (with the Company which belongs to those Parts) a Training. And as the rest of their Fellow-Souldiers did, spent great part of the day with great delight, till at length they were invited to a moderatd Dinner, where they temperately refresht themselves, and so returned to perform the rest of their duty for that day; which when they had accomplished, they called to an Acquaintance or two, who were then likewise marching homewards, and askt them if they were willing to go drink a Pint or two of Wine, to which these their Acquaintance consented, and so they agreed at first to have gone to a Tavern in *Smithfield*, but being upon better thoughts over-ruled by one of them, who thought he had greater interest at another place out of Town (which since it will make nothing towards that Caution, which by these sad Examples we would desire others to take notice of) we shall forbear to mention. Here it is reported they sate for the space of three hours, or thereabouts; and when they had drank a Pint and half a-pice of White-Wine, about Nine of the Clock that Evening they parted,

parted, and every one went ſoberly to their reſpective Dwellings.

But ſad it is to relate, that though they were all ſeemingly well when they went to Bed, yet ſcarcely ever a one of them roſe in health the next morning; at leaſtwiſe theſe three ſicken'd preſently, and being Intimates, ſent to ſee how each other did, but to their ſorrow found they were all in the ſame ſad Predicament of ſickneſs, and being all of them ſober men, and of good converſations, they themſelves as well as all that knew them, concluded it was the bad White-Wine they drank overnight was the cauſe of their ſickneſs, and as you ſhall hear of their deaths; for after they had undergone great pains, and in vain ſtrugled with their Diſtemper, the one of them dyed on *Wedneſday*, and was buried on *Saturday* laſt, the other was buried on *Monday*, and the third on *Thurſday* following.

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